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Redevelopment Board Minutes 03/17/2014

Arlington Redevelopment Board
March 17, 2014 Minutes
Town Hall Annex, Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall – 7:00pm

Approved: March 31, 2014

PRESENT: Mike Cayer, Chair, Andrew Bunnell, Bruce Fitzsimmons, Christine Scypinski, Andy West

ABSENT:

STAFF: Carol Kowalski

Documents Used:

ProCon updated plan sheets detailing alterations to as-built plans, 11 pages

Photo of garage exhaust stack as seen from Symmes Road, provided by BethAnn Friedman

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Mr. Cayer explained that a hearing had been scheduled for BrightView, which has since been withdrawn since a hearing is not required to review changes to as-built plans to determine if they are material and substantial or not.

Attorney Josh Davis, BrightView representative David Holland, ProCon architect Erik Anderson, Shelter representative Alan Siegfried, and partner with Upton & Partners, Jake Upton, were introduced.

Mr. Holland apologized for having the discussion after the fact. He said that site conditions changed during engineering and during construction.

Ms. Scypinski asked what material will replace the former patio at the door that was eliminated. Mr. Holland commented that he thought it was a landscape bed with a rhododendron. Ms. Scypinski said that would be a good option and requested that it stay as rhododendron.

After explaining some minor exterior building alterations, Mr. Anderson turned to the site changes. He stated that parking shifted to make the grading work. Also a parking space was sticking out into the driving aisle and had to be adjusted. One parking space was moved outside from the garage where a generator had to go in the garage.

Mr. Siegfried said they had encountered ledge at the wall area under Symmes Road.

The Board and Ms. Kowalski asked for detail on the trees and plants removed as a result of the parking changes. Ms. Scypinski commented that the space is now very congested and the landscape area has been substantially reduced, exposing the wall. The realigned parking space is awkward.

Mr. Upton commented that the wall pinning was an extremely technically challenging task, causing space to be shifted from the entry area to the landscape beds at the top of the wall along the public sidewalk.

Mr. Holland commented that he feels they have added and increased the total number of plantings in that area. Ms. Scypinski asked that they consider a 'green' treatment for the angled parking space such as a stabilized lawn area, in order to reduce the amount of additional paving.

Mr. Fitzsimmons asked what the width was for the sidewalk on Symmes Road.

In response to the loss of the snow storage area shown on the plan, Mr. Siegfried commented that the snow storage had been replaced, but could not recall where.

Ms. Scypinski stated that the detectable warning strip is no longer needed for ADA, and that the Board had checked this with Katya Podsiadlo, Shelter's landscape architect, who brought the legislation. Ms. Scypinski asked why the pavers at the drop-off entry were removed. They were an attractive feature that broke up the bituminous paving.

Mr. Siegfried stated that they have had experiences in Rhode Island and Danvers, Massachusetts in which materials settle differently and created a trip hazard. Ms. Scypinski requested that material such as colored stamped asphalt ('street print') or an applied colored resin material such as 'imprint' be considered to designate the drop-off.

BethAnn Friedman of Hazel Terrace introduced photos of the exhaust stack as seen from Symmes Street, and the exhaust generator from the garage.

Eric Anderson stated that it will be graded out a bit, but right now it's dug out. He continued that the plan is to plant around it and paint the structure tan to match the building.

Ms. Scypinski commented that the Board needs to know what will be planted and how tall the plants will get. Ms. Scypinski also asked for the finished height of the exhaust stack after grading changes.

Mr. Fitzsimmons requested that Shelter return with a planting plan and snow storage areas noted in the main entry area and at the garage entry.

Mr. Anderson stated that the same lights would be used on the sign.

Ms. Scypinski stated that the new railings behind the sign are distracting and confirmed that there will be plantings on both sides of the sign.

Mr. Cayer requested that additional information be brought in next week.

Lorelei Kollege of Brattle Street stated that the bus exceeds the length of its space and prevents cars from going into the garage properly. She commented that the light shining down on the white van reflects brightly. She noticed the van had been moved, and wanted to know where it would be stored permanently.

Mr. Holland stated that Shelter intends to keep the van in its present location and that landscaping will be used to mitigate the glare. Mr. Holland acknowledged that the glare was something that Shelter did not anticipate.

Ms. Friedman mentioned that an outdoor fireplace was present and that this feature was not allowed. Mr. Cayer stated that he expected the Fire Chief would inspect the outdoor fireplace.

Mr. Cayer then turned to the recommended vote of the Board to Town Meeting on zoning warrant articles; the hearing had taken place on March 3, 2014.

The Board stated that they will get back administrative comments to the Director, and then during the next meeting they will finalize the report.

Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that the warrant article as written is straightforward, and that the definition from the state is practically verbatim. Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that B5 was too restrictive on its own since it is only Arlington Center, and that B3 includes other commercial districts.

Mr. Cayer said the Board would set up a series of slides showing other districts.

Mr. Fitzsimmons mentioned that the question arose of whether one can apply for a special permit before getting a license, and that the Board of Health regulations address this question.

Ms. Scypinski advised that the Board have a list of the Environmental Design Review standards at Town Meeting so Town Meeting members will have assurance that the standards address key concerns.

Mr. Bunnell said the Board should be prepared to review state permitting and to mention the Town's working group that drafted the proposed vote.

Ms. Scypinski moved the recommended vote as written. Mr. West seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Cayer reviewed John Belskis' article and unwillingness to specify a number of affordable housing units by which to increase the inclusionary zoning bylaw. It's currently at 15%.

Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that since the article doesn't specify a number and remains vague, it would not be clear to developers. Increasing the percentage of units of affordable housing in the Town's bylaw closer to that required by 40B could result in more 40B developments. For this reason Mr. Fitzsimmons recommended no action. All agreed.

Mr. West added that there was more doubt introduced by Mr. Belskis' article and therefore there was no compelling reason to change it. He added that the Board does not want to discourage development, especially during the Master Plan.

Mr. Bunnell recommended no action. Mr. Fitzsimmons moved. All voted in favor.

Mr. Cayer turned to Article 8. He stated that this is not a matter for a no-action recommendation. Mr. Fitzsimmons moved not to vote a recommendation on the article but add the statement, "It is the Board's understanding that this will be reported out by the Board of Selectmen." Mr. West seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Cayer reviewed that the Board was informed by Town Counsel that Article 9, use of public ways, is under the purview of the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Fitzsimmons moved no action. Ms. Scypinski seconded. All voted in favor.

Ms. Kowalski reported on the status of the Master Plan. Mr. Fitzsimmons asked, with respect to the Community Preservation Act, if the Master Plan Advisory Committee planned to discuss their position on CPA in case the ARB was asked.

The Board decided to hold April 7, 2014 for a tentative meeting date, and would meet from 7:00pm-8:00pm on April 28, 2014, the first night of Town Meeting.

The Board urged that the Master Plan Advisory Committee should present a report to Town Meeting with an update on the progress to date and projected work through Town Meeting 2015.

The Board then turned to the March 3, 2014 minutes.

Mr. Bunnell moved the approval of the minutes as amended. Mr. West seconded. All voted in favor.

Ms. Scypinski moved to adjourn. Mr. West seconded. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kowalski